

✓ Latest release

Job mobility

Job mobility and job search of employed people, including changing industry or occupation, job tenure, and changes in current job (e.g. hours).

Reference period February 2023

Released 30/06/2023

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Key statistics

During the year ending February 2023:

- Job mobility remained at 9.5% for a second year in a row, the highest rate in a decade.
- The share of job mobility remained highest for Professionals, at 24% of those who changed jobs.
- 2.3 million people left or lost a job.
- The annual retrenchment rate was 1.4%, the lowest annual rate on record (since 1972).

More information from the annual Participation, Job Search and Mobility (PJSM) survey is available in these topic-based releases:

- [Potential workers \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/potential-workers/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/potential-workers/latest-release).
- [Underemployed workers \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/underemployed-workers/latest-release\)](/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/underemployed-workers/latest-release).

Microdata from the PJSM survey for 2015 to 2023 is available in [DataLab \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab) as a supplementary file to the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia). For more information, refer to [Microdata and TableBuilder: Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia).

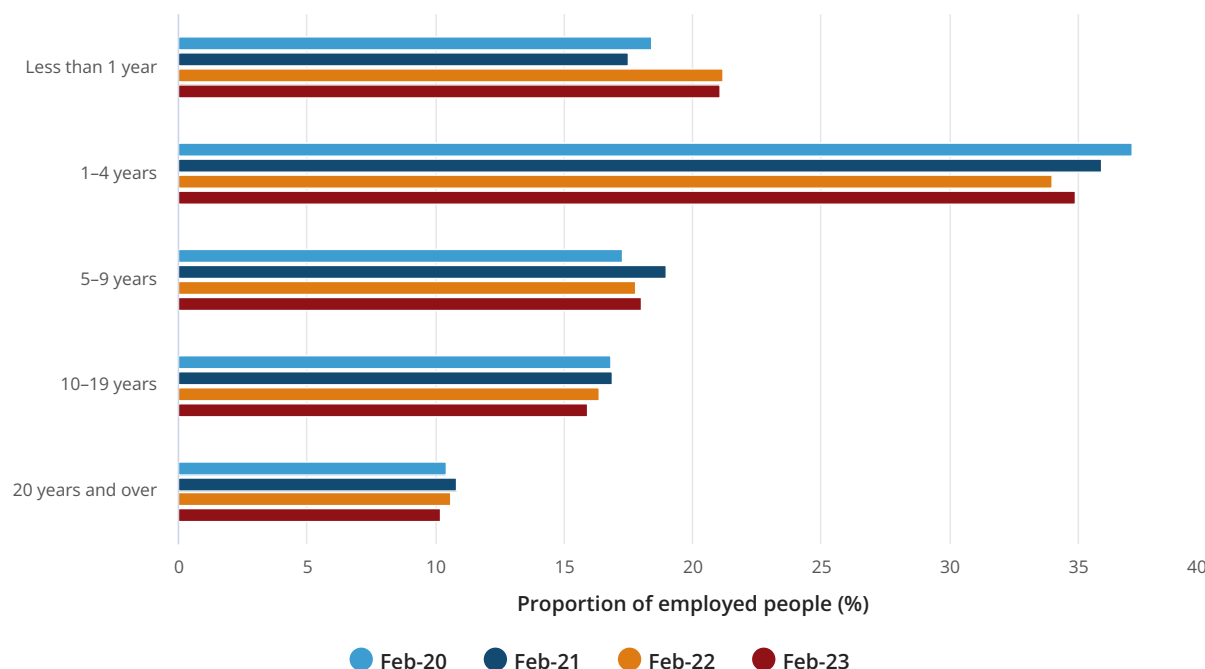
Duration of employment

There were 13.8 million people employed in February 2023. Over half (56%) had been employed in their current job for less than 5 years. About 1 in 5 (21%) had been in their job for less than 1 year.

The proportion of those in their current job between 1 and 4 years has risen since 2022, up from 34% to 35%.

About 1 in 10 employed people (10%) had been in their current job for 20 years or more.

Chart 1: Duration of employment in current job



New entrants to employment

2.9 million people started their current job in the year ending February 2023. This was an increase of 0.1 million people into employment compared to the 2.8 million people who started their job in the year ending February 2022.

Of those who started their current job in the year ending February 2023, 1.6 million entered or re-entered employment without any previous job activity during the last 12 months (i.e. they did not change jobs during the year). These 'new entrants' into employment include people who have:

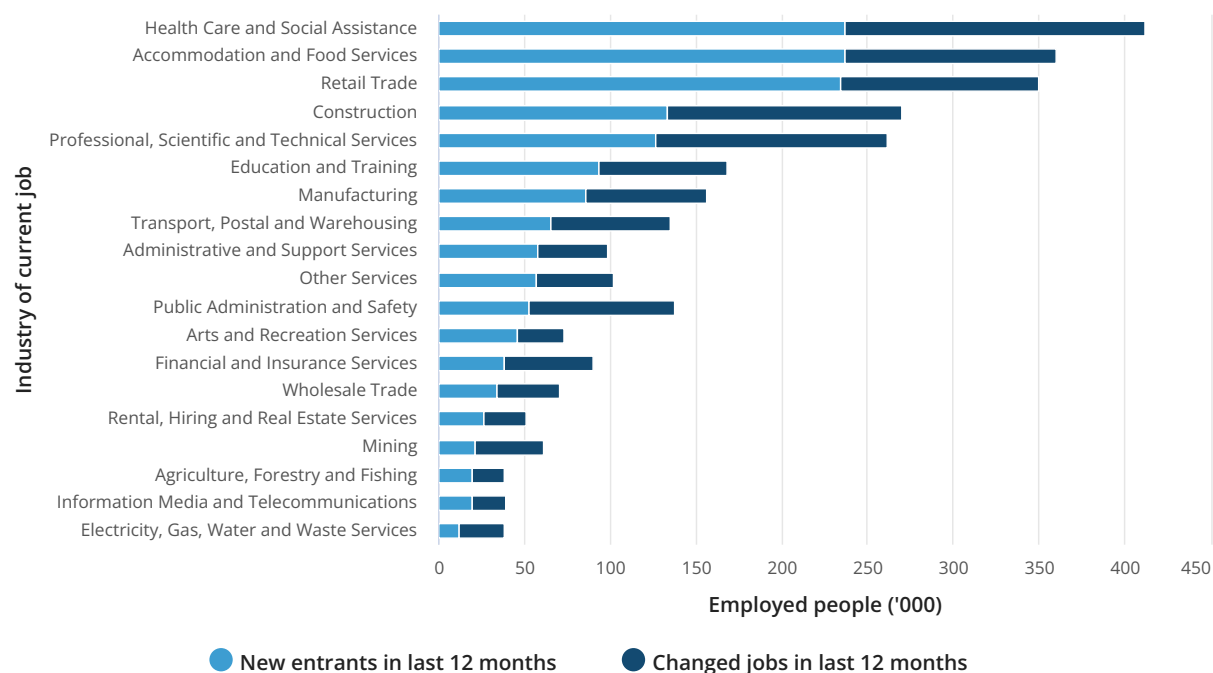
- Never worked before and started their first job,
- Started a new job after leaving or losing a previous job from more than 12 months ago, and
- Resumed a held job or returned to a previous job after a period of absence (and reported their current duration of employment from their restart date).

New entrants were evenly split between men (760,600) and women (835,500). 80% of new entrants were aged under 45 years with 39% aged 15 to 24 years.

The industries with the most new entrants were:

- Health care and social assistance - 237,000.
- Accommodation and food services - 237,000.
- Retail trade - 235,000.
- Construction - 133,000.
- Professional, scientific and technical services - 127,000.

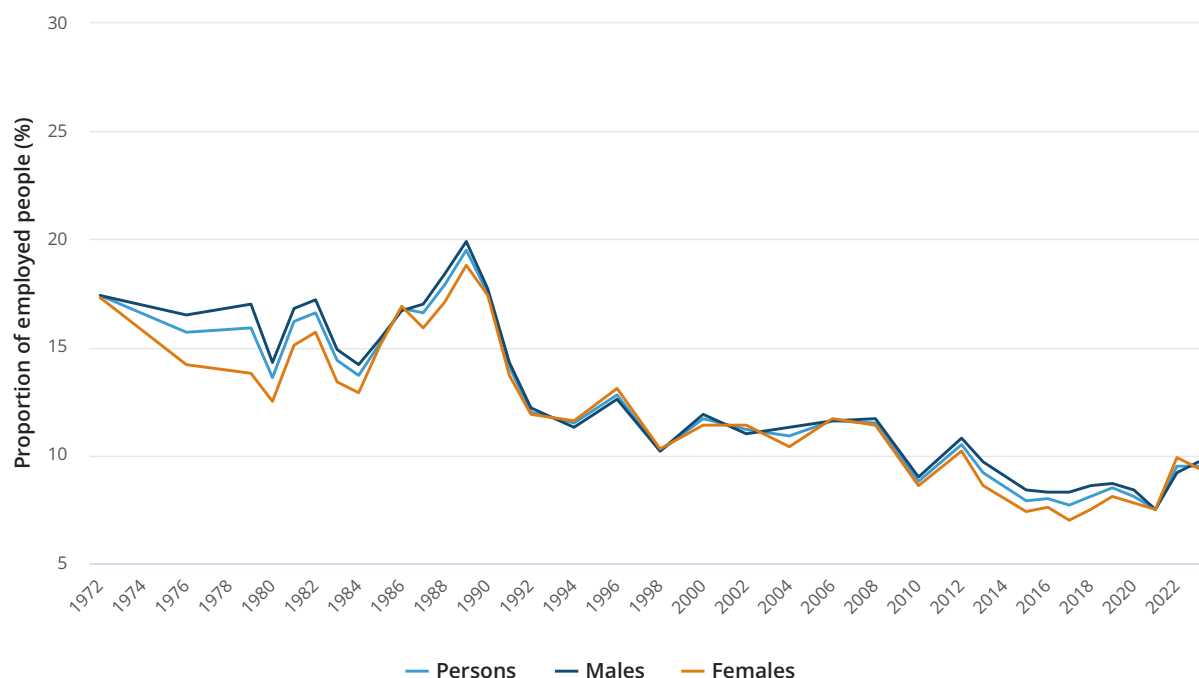
Chart 2: People who started their current job in the last 12 months



Job mobility

1.3 million people changed jobs during the year ending February 2023, equating to a job mobility rate of 9.5% of all employed people changing jobs during the year. This was same rate of job mobility as the year ending February 2022 (9.5%) which was, at that point, the highest rate of mobility since February 2012 (10.5%).

Chart 3a: Employed people who changed jobs during the year by sex



Note: 2015 to 2023 data are available from Table 01 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/jobs/job-mobility/feb-2023#data-downloads\)](#). Pre-2015 historical data can be found in the 2018 release of [Participation, Job Search and Mobility \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6226.0Main+Features1February%202018?OpenDocument\)](#) publication.

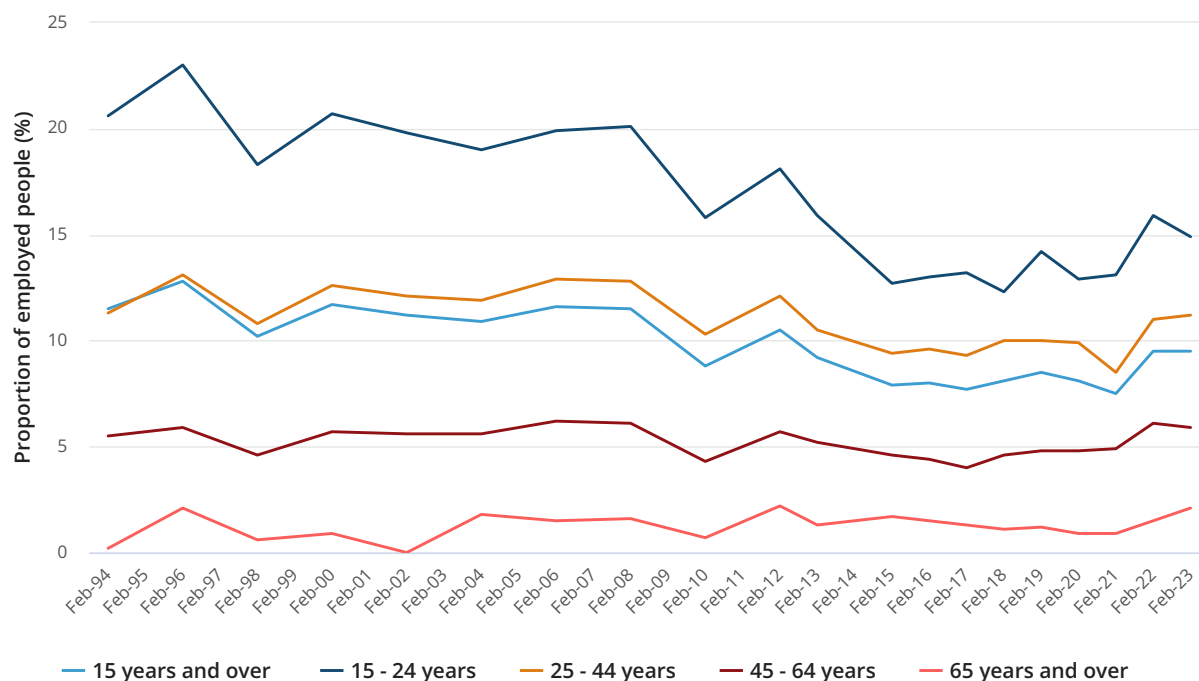
Age

Younger workers are generally more mobile than older workers. In February 2023, the job mobility rates for selected age groups were as follows:

- Aged 15 - 24 years - 14.9%.
- Aged 25 - 44 years - 11.2%.
- Aged 45 - 64 years - 5.9%.
- Aged 65 years and over - 2.1%.

For each age group, the job mobility rates in the last two years have been the highest in the last decade. Prior to the last two years, job mobility has generally been trending down for younger workers.

Chart 3b: Employed people who changed jobs during the year by age



Note: 2015 to 2023 data are available from Table 01 in [Data downloads \(/statistics/labour/jobs/job-mobility/feb-2023#data-downloads\)](#).

State and territory

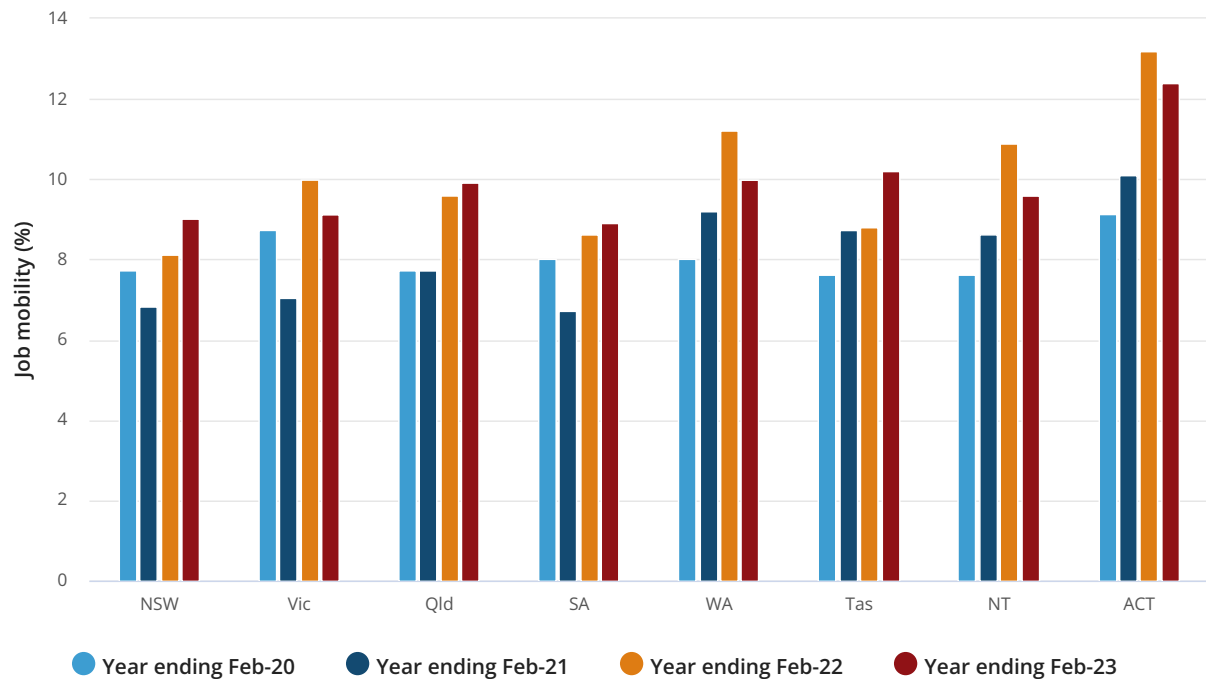
The states and territories with the highest rate of job mobility were:

- Australian Capital Territory - 12.5%.
- Tasmania - 10.3%.
- Western Australia - 10.1%.
- Queensland - 10%.

The states and territories with the greatest increase in job mobility between the year ending February 2022 and the year ending February 2023 were:

- Tasmania - up 1.4 percentage points (from 8.9% to 10.3%).
- New South Wales - up 0.9 points (from 8.2% to 9.1%).

Chart 4: Job mobility by state and territory



Note:

- Job mobility is the number of people who changed jobs during the year as a proportion of people who were employed at the end of the year

Change in occupation

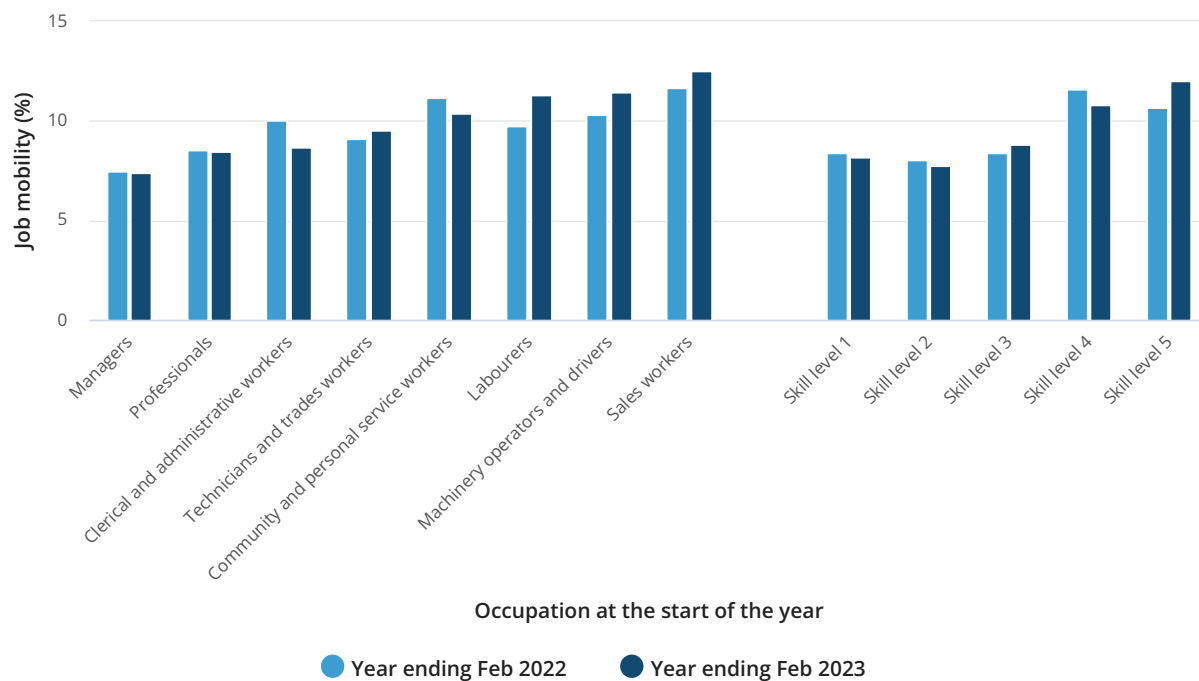
Job mobility rose in four out of the eight of the major occupation groups. The largest rises were for:

- Labourers (10.0% to 11.6%).
- Machinery operators and drivers (10.6% to 11.8%).
- Sales workers (12% to 12.9%).

The largest decrease was in:

- Clerical and administrative workers (10.3% to 8.9%).

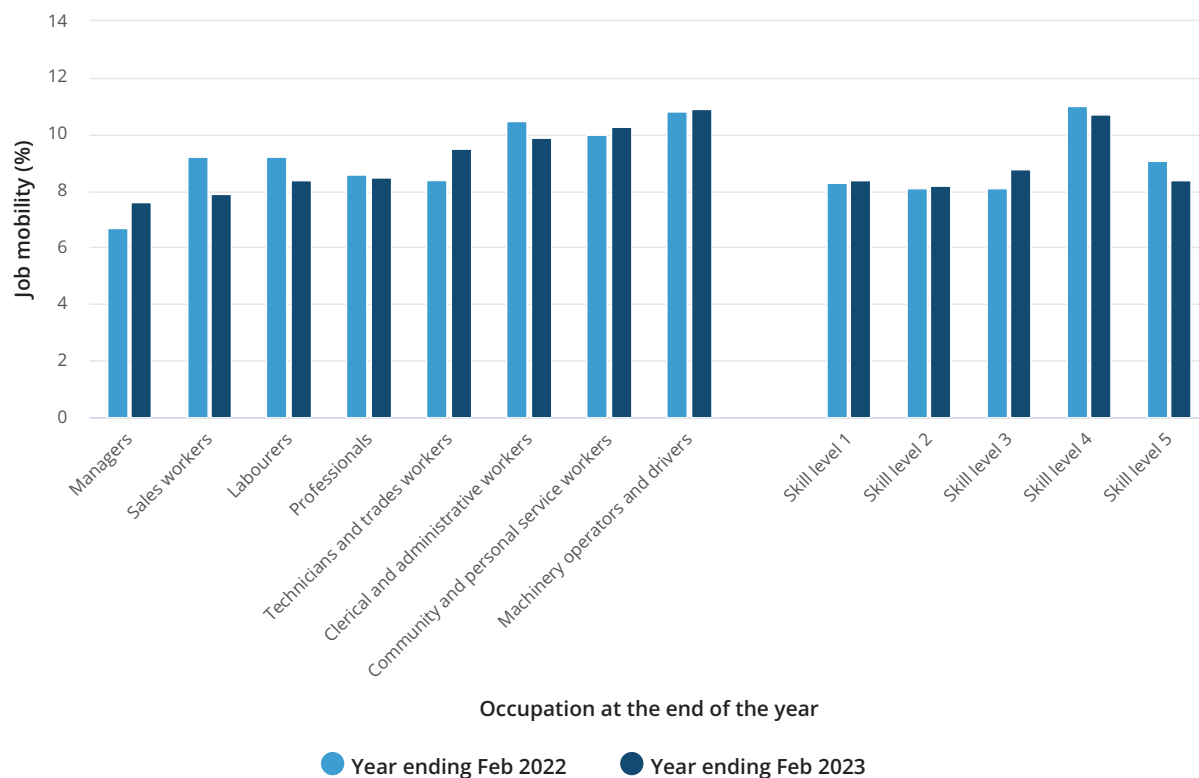
Chart 5a: Job mobility by occupation that was left



Note:

- The occupation at the end of the year is not necessarily the same as the occupation at the start of the year, as people can change occupations when they change jobs. See Chart 5b for an alternative view of job mobility that groups people by their occupation at the end of the year (i.e. the occupation they entered when changing jobs).

Chart 5b: Job mobility by occupation that was entered



As in previous years, Professionals made up the largest share of people who changed jobs. While job mobility within the Professional occupation group had the second lowest rate at 8.7%, Professionals made up the largest share of total employment at 25.9%. This equated to 282,700 professionals who changed jobs during the year ending February 2023, which was a 24% share of all people who changed jobs, down from 24.5% in the previous year. The next largest share was Technicians and trades workers at 14.2%, up from 13.7% in the previous year. Machinery operators and drivers had the smallest share (7.3% share, up from 6.7% from the previous year).

Chart 6a: People who changed jobs by occupation that was left

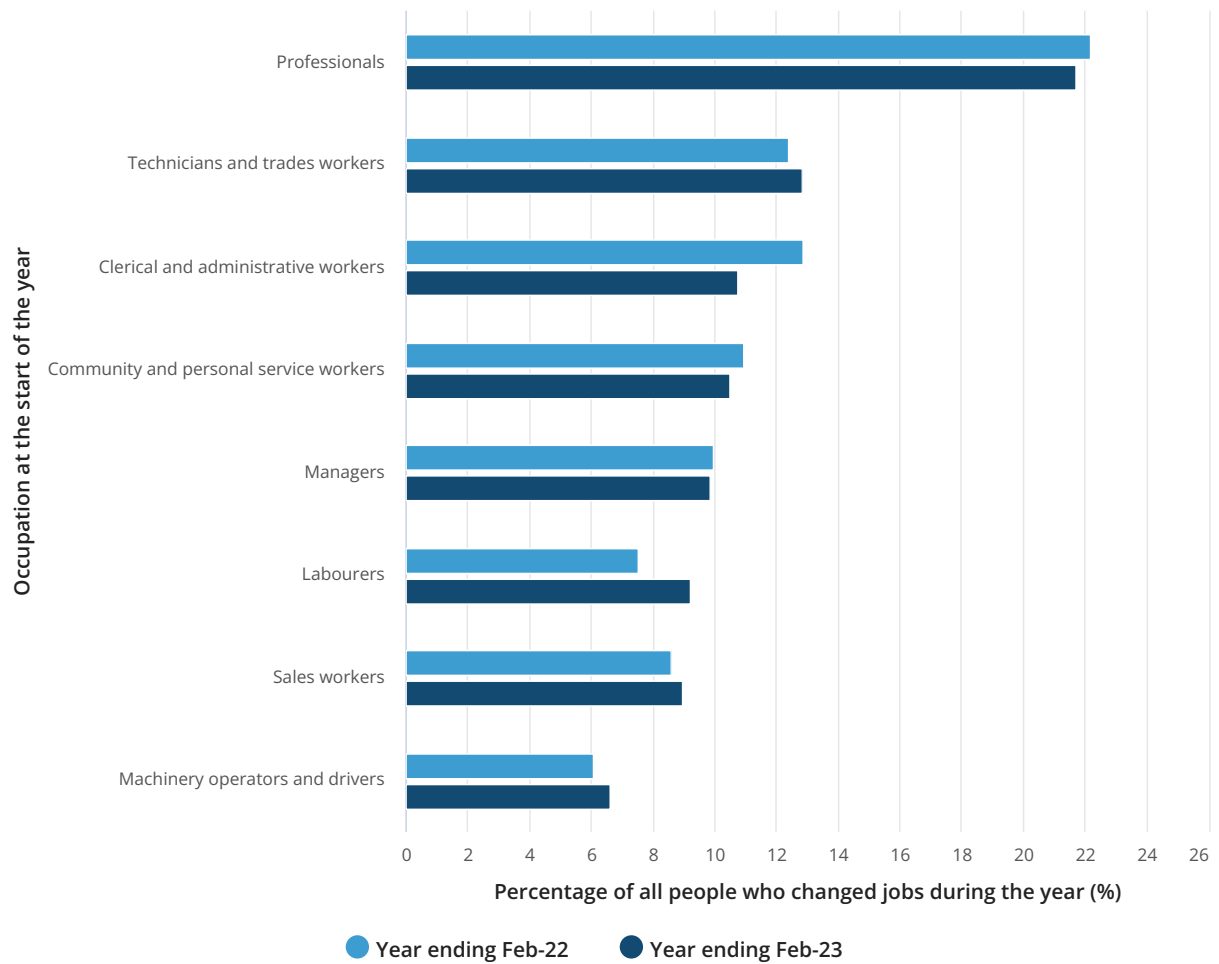
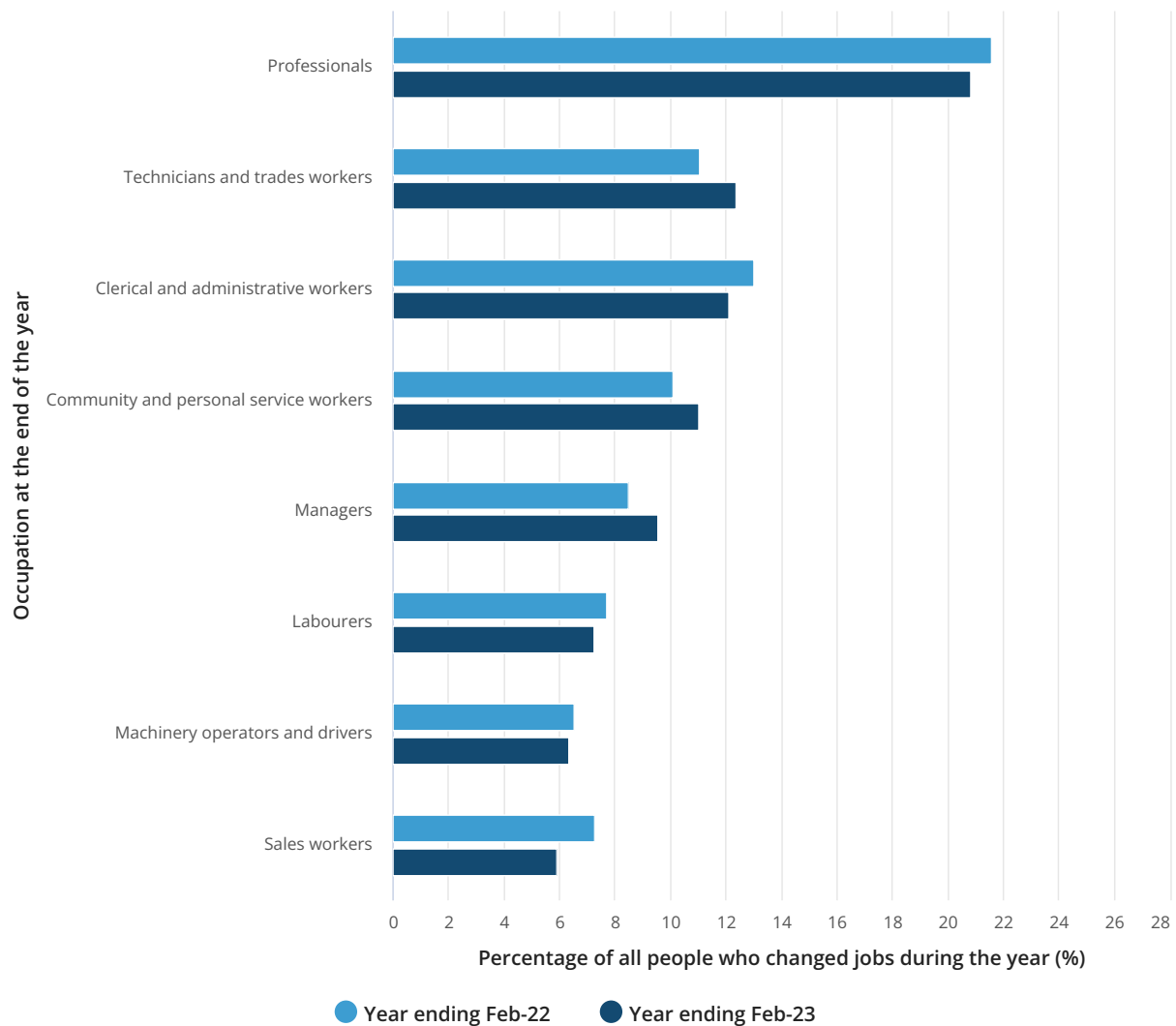


Chart 6b: People who changed jobs by occupation that was entered

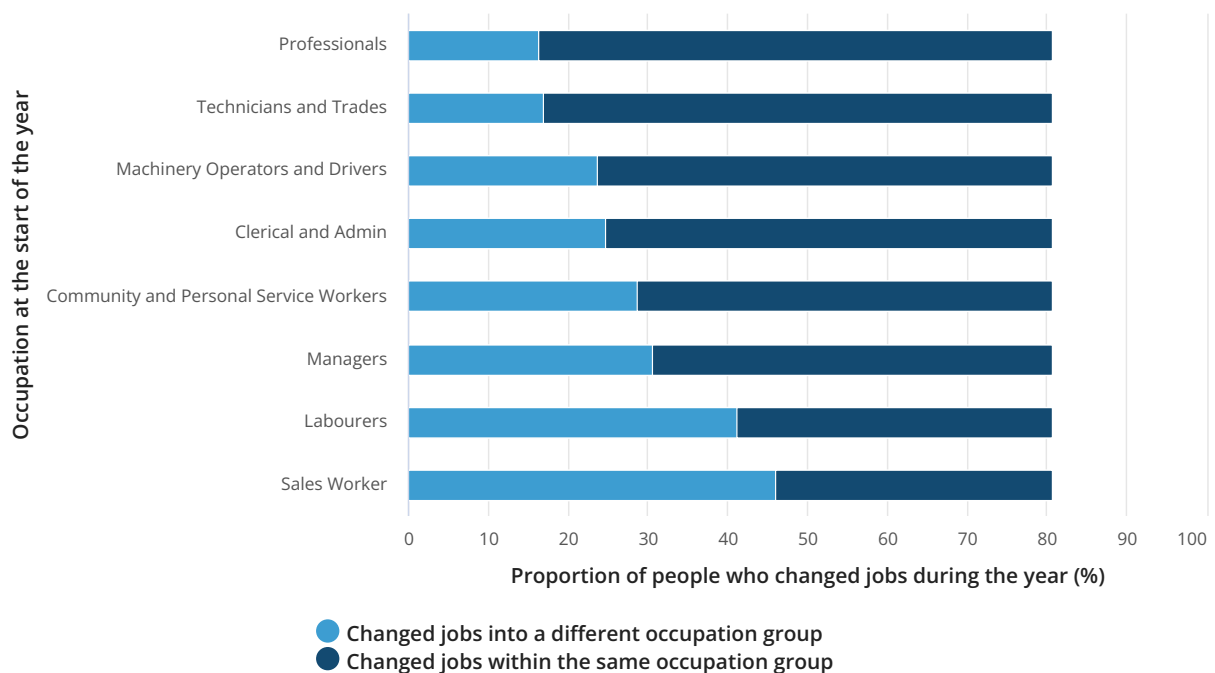


Most employees (94%) who remained employed in their main job for a year or longer had no change in occupation with their current employer during the 12 months ending February 2023.

Of the 1.3 million people who changed jobs in the last year, 54% (714,500) were working in

the same major occupation group as they were at the start of the year. Sales workers was the largest of only two occupation groups who had a higher proportion of people who changed jobs into a different major occupation group (57%) than in the same major occupation group (43%).

Chart 7: Changed jobs to a different occupation



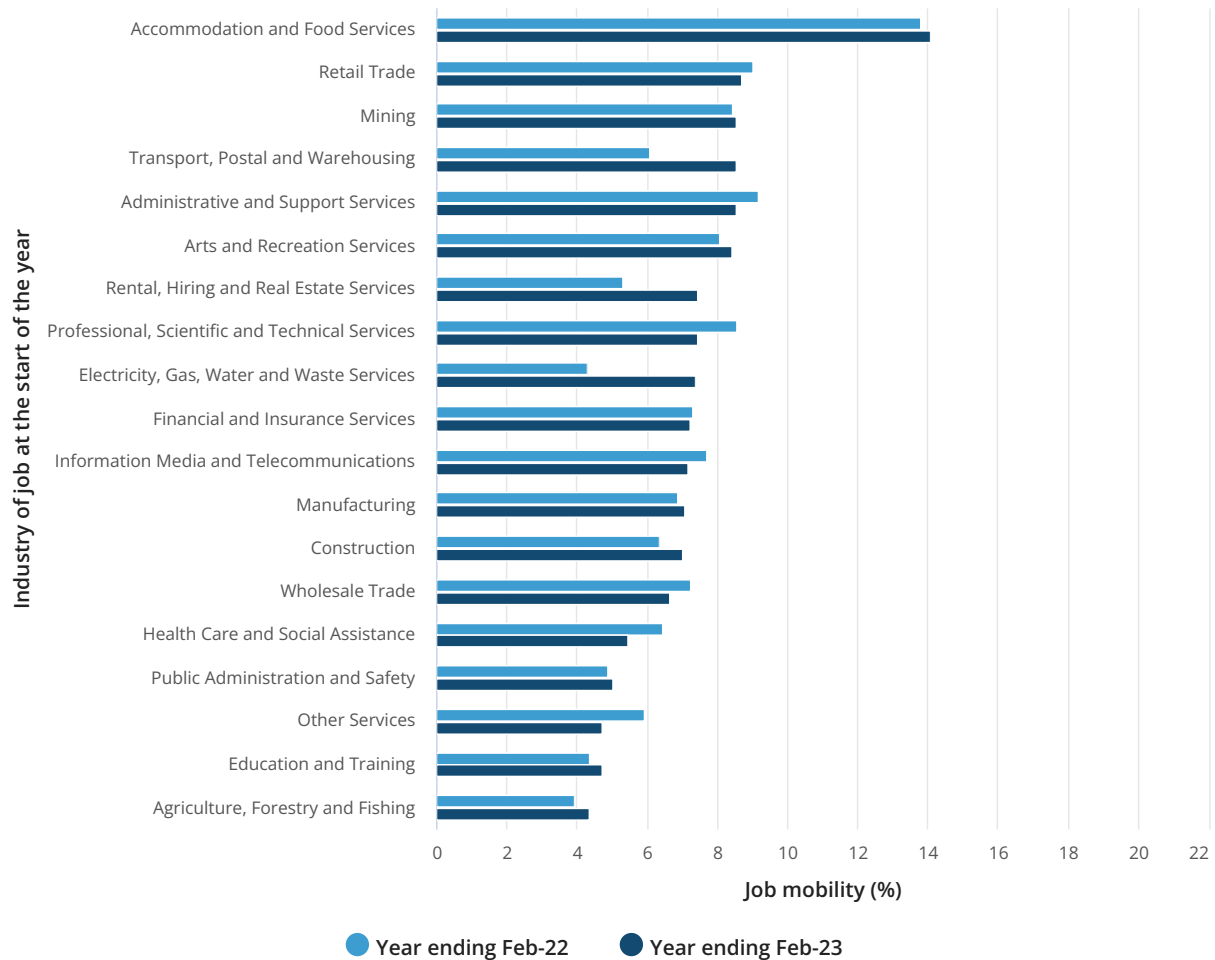
Change in industry

Job mobility rose in most industries, with the largest increases in:

- Electricity, gas, water and waste services (5.8% to 10%).
- Transport, postal and warehousing (8.2% to 11.6%).
- Rental, hiring and real estate services (7.2% to 10.1%).

The industry that saw the largest decrease in job mobility was Professional, scientific and technical services (11.6% to 10.1%), which indicates fewer people were leaving the professional, scientific and technical services industry.

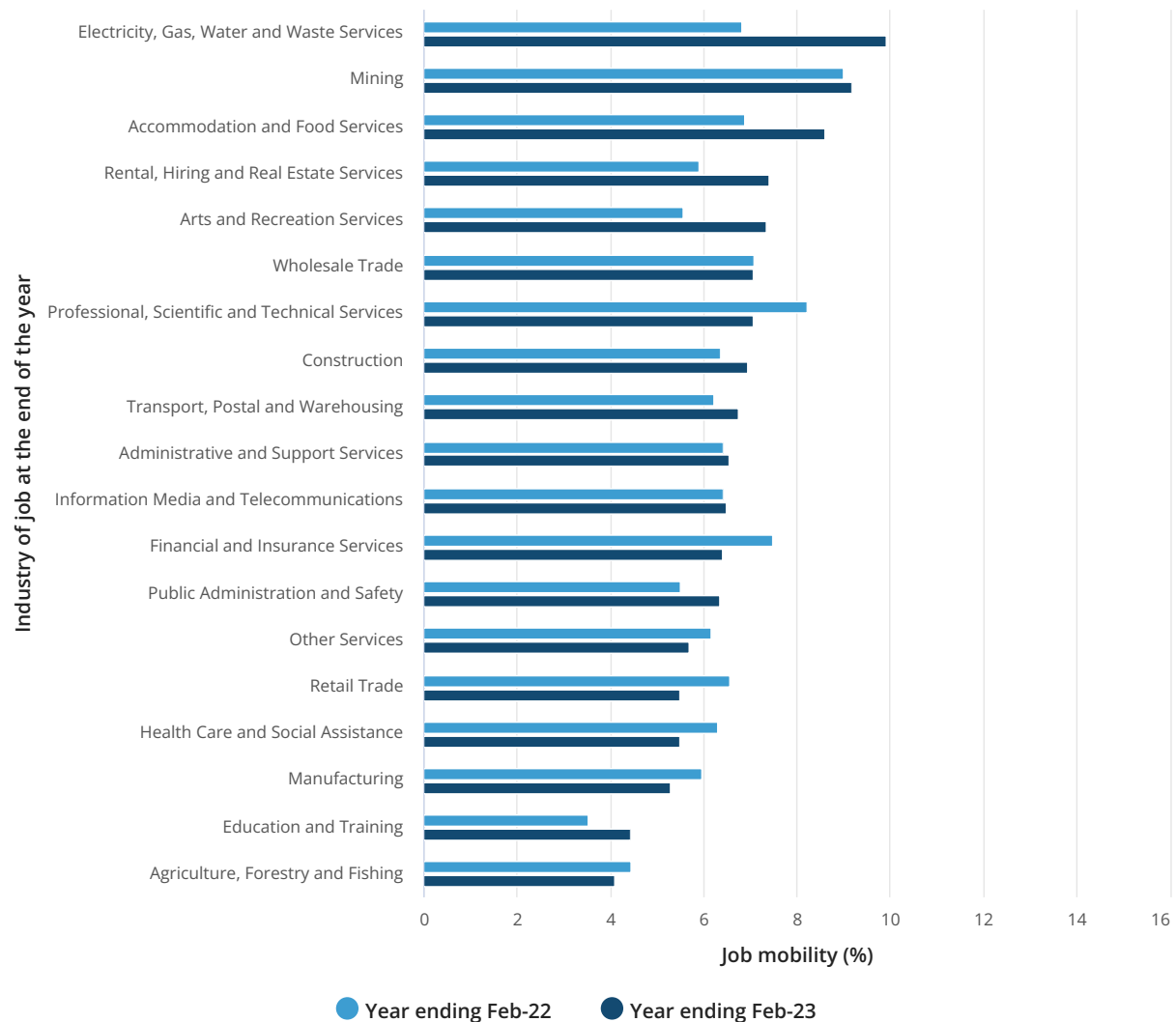
Chart 8a: Job mobility by industry of job that was left



Note:

- The industry at the end of the year is not necessarily the same as the industry at the start of the year, as people can change industries when they change jobs. See Chart 8b for an alternative view of job mobility that groups people by their industry at the end of the year (i.e. the industry they entered when changing jobs).

Chart 8b: Job mobility by industry of job that was entered



The Accommodation and food services industry accounted for the largest share of people who changed jobs in the year ending February 2023 (12.1%). This was followed by Retail trade (11.8%) and Health care and social assistance (11.5%).

Chart 9a: People who changed jobs by industry of job that was left

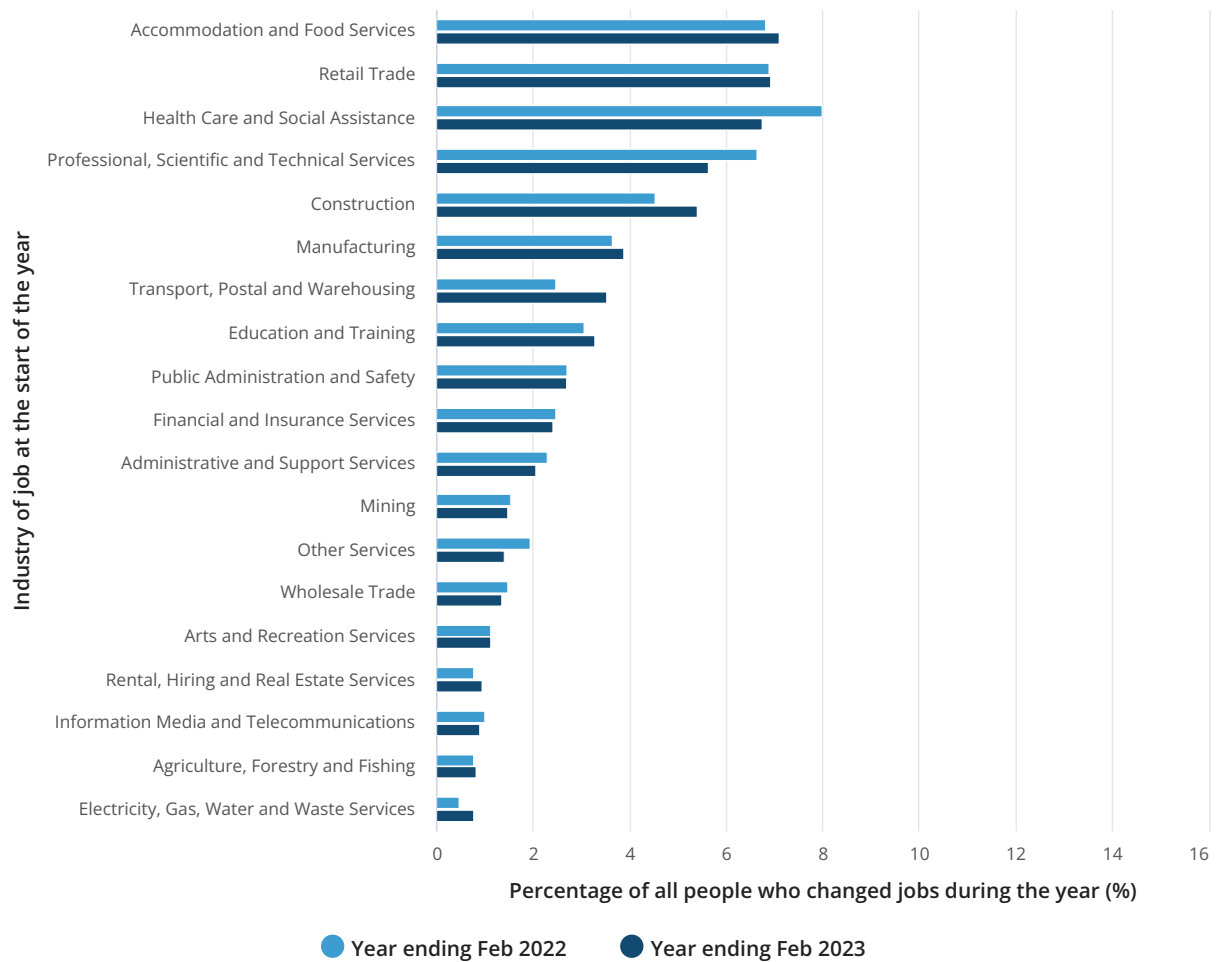
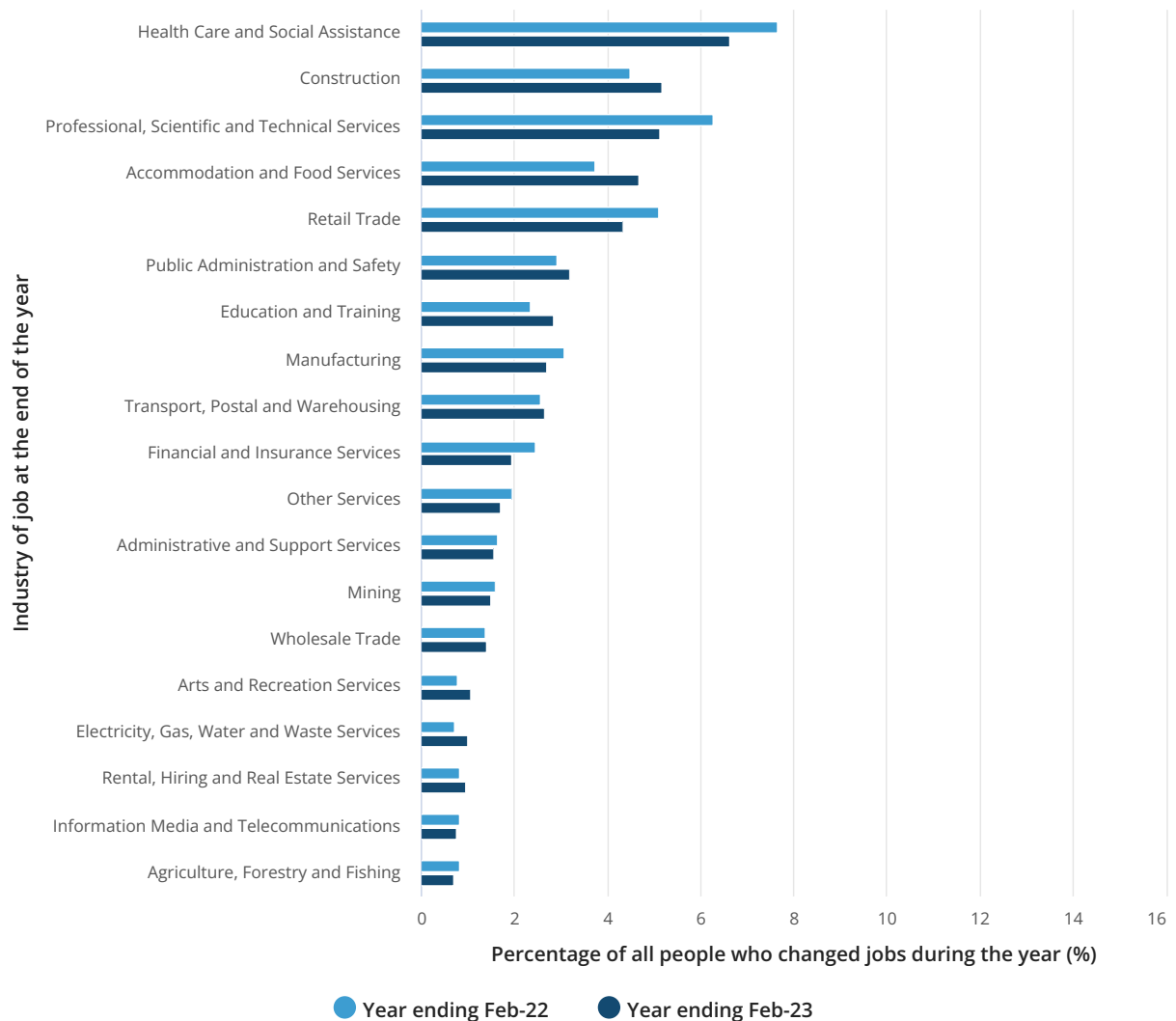


Chart 9b: People who changed jobs by industry of job that was entered



Left or lost a job

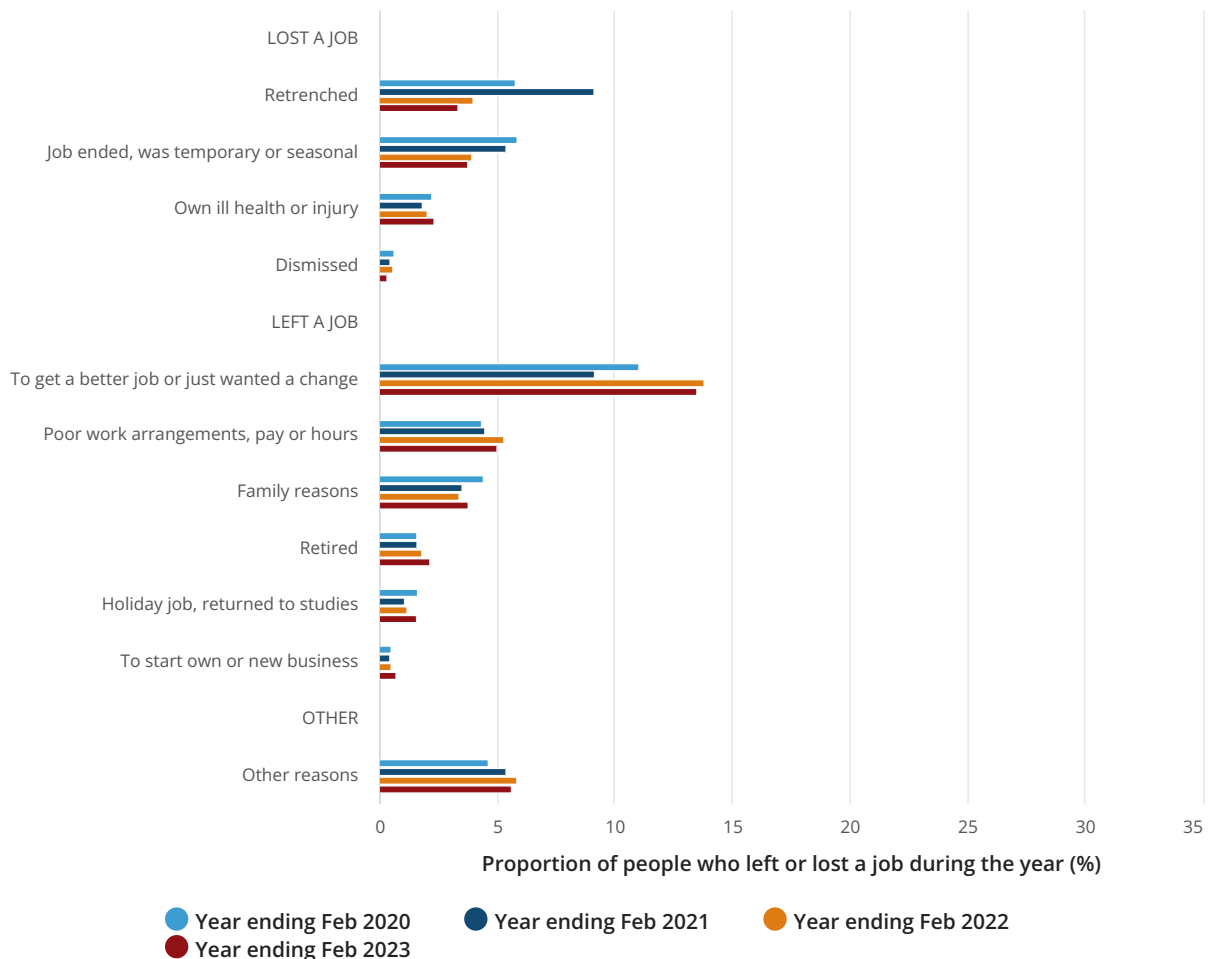
There were 2.3 million people in February 2023 who left or lost a job in the previous 12 months, up from 2.1 million in February 2022. 1 in 13 of these people (7.9%, or 184,200 people) were retrenched, which is a record low for the series, but it follows a high number of retrenchments during the pandemic in the year ending February 2021 (21.6%, or 390,200

people).

A third (32%) of all people who left or lost a job in the 12 months to February 2023 were people who left a job to obtain a better job or just wanted a change (751,600), up from 21.7% during the pandemic in the year ending February 2021.

1 in 20 people retired last year (5.1%), up from 1 in 27 people (3.7%) who retired in the year before the pandemic (year ending February 2020).

Chart 10: Main reason left or lost a job

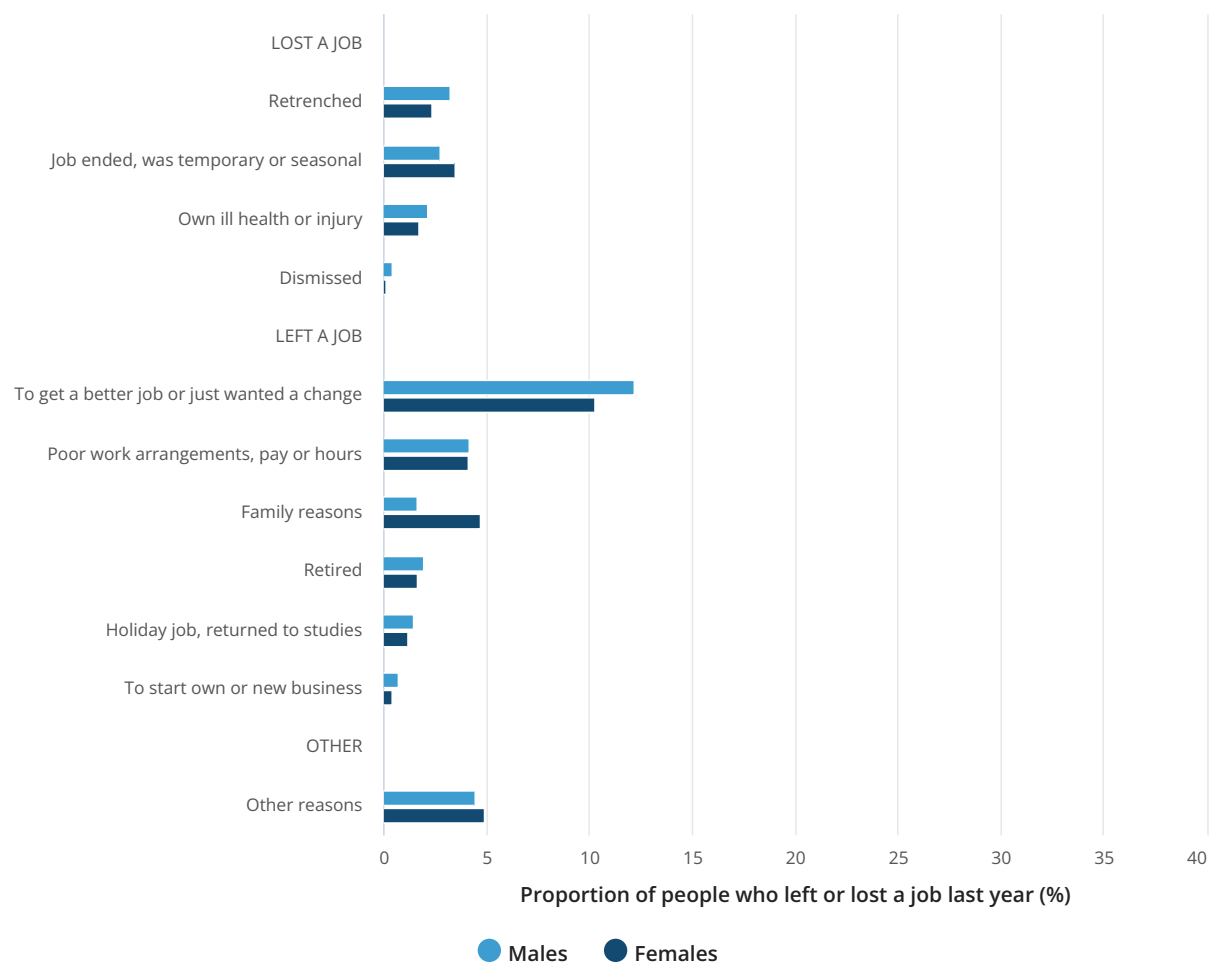


Note:

- Owner managers whose businesses closed down for economic reasons are included in "Retrenched"
- Owner managers whose businesses closed down or were sold for other reasons are included in "Other reasons"

More males than females reported being retrenched last year (9.2% and 6.7%). The most common reason people left a job was to get a better job or just wanted a change, (35% for males and 29.6% for females). A higher percentage of females reported leaving a job for family reasons than males, (13.5% and 4.6%).

Chart 11: Main reason left or lost a job by sex



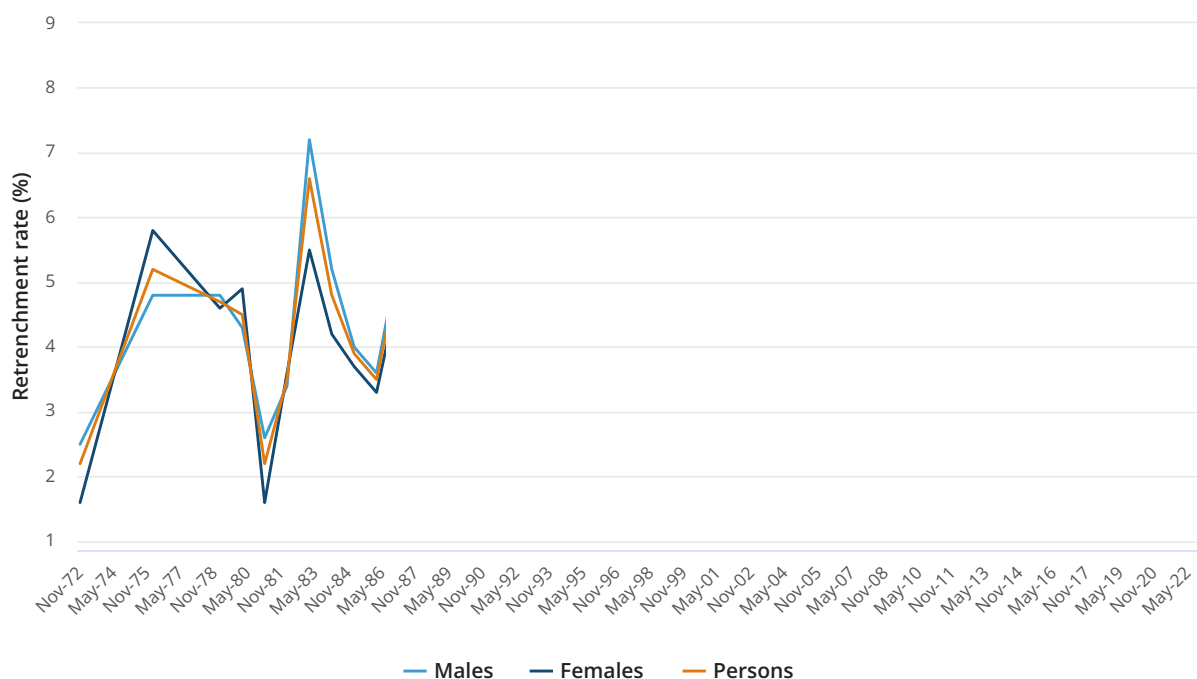
Note:

- Owner managers whose businesses closed down for economic reasons are included in "Retrenched"
- Owner managers whose businesses closed down or were sold for other reasons are included in "Other reasons"

Retrenchments

The annual retrenchment rate is the number of people who were retrenched in a given year as a proportion of the number of people who were employed at the start of that year. In the year ending February 2023, the retrenchment rate was 1.4%, which is the lowest annual rate on record. This follows on from a high retrenchment rate in the year ending February 2021 of 3.0%. The highest retrenchment rate on record was 7.2% in the year ending February 1991.

Chart 12: Annual retrenchment rate



Data downloads

Job mobility

⬇ Download all (3.88 MB)

Table 1. Labour mobility, retrenchments and duration of employment

⬇ [Download XLSX](#)
[1.07 MB]

Table 2. Retrenchments and other reasons for ceasing a job last year

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Table 3. Changes in employment characteristics of people employed last year

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Engagements and Separations

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Table 4. Separations and other changes in employment of people employed last year by industry

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Table 5. Engagements and other changes in employment of people employed last year by industry

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[2.35 MB]

Table 6. Separations and other changes in employment of people employed last year by occupation

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[1.61 MB]

Table 7. Engagements and other changes in employment of people employed last year by occupation

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[1.57 MB]

Relative standard errors, Tables 1 to 7

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Previous catalogue number

This release uses ABS catalogue number 6223.0*.

Data from this release was previously published in:

- [Participation, Job Search and Mobility](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/participation-job-search-and-mobility-australia>) (6226.0**), 2015-2020.
- [Persons Not In the Labour Force, Underemployed Workers and Job Search Experience](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/BBB46A2E9C441282CA257DF40079A913?OpenDocument) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyCatalogue/BBB46A2E9C441282CA257DF40079A913?OpenDocument>) (6226.0.55.001), 2014.
- [Labour Mobility](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6209.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Mobility,%20Australia~February%202013~Latest~21/08/2013&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6209.0&issue=February%202013&num=&view=&) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6209.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Mobility,%20Australia~February%202013~Latest~21/08/2013&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6209.0&issue=February%202013&num=&view=&>) (6209.0), 1972-2013.
- [Career Experience](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6254.0&viewtitle=Career%20Experience,%20Australia~Nov%202002~Latest~22/09/2003&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6254.0&issue=Nov%202002&num=&view=&) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6254.0&viewtitle=Career%20Experience,%20Australia~Nov%202002~Latest~22/09/2003&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6254.0&issue=Nov%202002&num=&view=&>) (6254.0), 1993-2002.
- [Retrenchment and Redundancy](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6266.0&viewtitle=Retrenchment%20and%20Redundancy,%20Australia~Jul%202001~Latest~02/08/2002&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6266.0&issue=Jul%202001&num=&view=&) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6266.0&viewtitle=Retrenchment%20and%20Redundancy,%20Australia~Jul%202001~Latest~02/08/2002&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6266.0&issue=Jul%202001&num=&view=&>) (6266.0), 1997-2001.
- [Persons Who Had Re-entered The Labour Force](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6264.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Had%20Re-entered%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Jul%201995~Latest~01/02/1996&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6264.0&issue=Jul%201995&num=&view=&) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6264.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Had%20Re-entered%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Jul%201995~Latest~01/02/1996&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6264.0&issue=Jul%201995&num=&view=&>) (6264.0), 1985-1995
- [Persons Who Have Left The Labour Force](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6267.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Have%20Left%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Sep%201994~Latest~02/04/1995&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6267.0&issue=Sep%201994&num=&view=&) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6267.0&viewtitle=Persons%20Who%20Have%20Left%20The%20Labour%20Force,%20Australia~Sep%201994~Latest~02/04/1995&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6267.0&issue=Sep%201994&num=&view=&>) (6267.0), 1985-1994
- [Labour Turnover](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?and%5B%5D=subject%3A%22Labour+Turnover%22&sort=-date) (<https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?and%5B%5D=subject%3A%22Labour+Turnover%22&sort=-date>) (6210.0), 1949-1976.

* Note: Catalogue number 6223.0 was previously used for [Family Status and Employment Status of the Population, Nov 1974-75](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/productsbyCatalogue/F926FA92D780E58ACA2585AA008276FA?OpenDocument) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/productsbyCatalogue/F926FA92D780E58ACA2585AA008276FA?OpenDocument>).

**** Note:** Catalogue number 6226.0 was previously used for [School Leavers, 1970 to 1974: their Employment Status and Education Experience, May 1975](https://archive.org/details/SchoolLeavers,1970to1974:theirEmploymentStatusandEducationExperience,May1975/62260-1975-05) ([https://archive.org/details/62260-1975-05](https://archive.org/details/SchoolLeavers,1970to1974:theirEmploymentStatusandEducationExperience,May1975/62260-1975-05)).

Methodology

[Participation, Job Search and Mobility, Australia methodology, February 2023](#)